

COOL WINTER ARTS & CRAFTS

Art is all about the process of exploration. The final results are less important than what a child imagines, experiences, and learns along the way. So says art educator MaryAnn Kohl in her new book, *Art With Anything*, packed with a year's worth of art projects kids can create out of everyday objects and recycled materials. *Instructor* is pleased to bring you this sneak peak at 21 of MaryAnn's favorite projects for you to explore with your students in the classroom. It's time to get messy!

PHOTOS: DAN SCHULIZ AND ARIJNA GOLDSTEIN



Third grader Ella turned an unloved argyle sock into a mouse puppet.



ROCK ART

What is an art material that is simple, natural and abundant? Rocks!

PAINT YOUR OWN Have students collect flat, smooth pebbles or small stones in different sizes. The first stop is to wash and dry the rocks well. (Part of the fun of collecting rocks is scrubbing them in soapy water together.) With adult help and guidance, have students use acrylic paints, metallic paints, or even nail polish to paint each rock in a different way. Some rocks need only a clear coating to bring out their natural beauty. When the rocks are dry, kids can decorate or add details with paint markers. A shoebox lid makes a perfect display space for each student's collection!

STONE STACK SCULPTURE The first step is to have students collect flat, smooth pebbles in different sizes. To make a base for the sculpture, cut a piece of cardboard into a square that is slightly wider than the largest stone. Wrap the square of cardboard with four or five layers of aluminum foil. Press the largest, flat stone into the center and then glue it in place. Let the glue dry a few minutes. Then continue this process, adding smaller and smaller stones to the stack, letting the glue dry a little between stacking. (Use tape to hold the rocks in place while drying, if needed.) Let the sculptures dry overnight and set up your museum-worthy display!

2 SUPER SAND PROJECTS

Sand—from the sandbox, the shore, the river, or even from the hardware store—is a versatile art material.

SAND PLAYDOUGH Mix four cups sand, two cups cornstarch, and a teaspoon of cream of tartar in a large saucepan. Have an adult cook this mixture over medium heat, stirring constantly until the mixture is stiff. Kids can sculpt the sand playdough with their hands. Sand playdough creations will air-dry in a few days.

SAND & GLUE DRAWINGS Have students draw simple, bold pictures on colored paper or posterboard. Squeeze white glue on the lines. Continue by completely filling in one small area of the picture with glue. Use a spoon to pour some colored sand carefully on the glue area. Shake the excess sand back into the cup or onto a tray. Repeat until the entire picture is covered with glue and colored sand.



2 LOVELY LEAF PROJECTS

Collect leaves, fresh green or colorful, for wonderful leaf art.

WATERCOLOR LEAF PAINT Have students cover a sheet of drawing paper with very wet watercolor paint. Then, invite them to press fresh leaves into the paint in any pattern or arrangement. When the paintings have dried completely, kids can carefully peel off the leaves to reveal their designs.

WIGGLE LEAF DESIGN Using a black marker, have students trace around two or three leaves on paper. Then ask students to color each leaf with crayons or markers. With a crayon or colored pencil, trace just beyond the leaf shape by a half inch. Then, trace around this line, expanding out. As lines crisscross over each other, the design will look like an optical illusion.

CARDBOARD CREATIONS

FROM BOX TO STAMP ART Save a couple of packing boxes and you'll have the basic ingredients for this simple project. Give each child two squares of cardboard. Invite students to cut a shape or design from one square and glue it to the other square. Once the glue is dry, kids can dip the designs into a shallow paint tray and then press it firmly on paper to make a print.

COFFEE ON CARDBOARD Use instant coffee on cardboard to make a fragrant, shiny, earth-tone painting! Mix instant coffee in three dishes. Mix the first very dark and strong, the second medium brown, and the third light brown or beige. Invite students to dip their paintbrushes into the coffee, and paint directly on a piece of cardboard. A great way to make faux cave drawings!

CARDBOARD MULTI-SQUARE PAINTING Have students cut cardboard into nine matching 6-inch squares. Choose an overall theme that connects to your curriculum (e.g., Underground Railroad) and invite students to paint each square in a different way that connects to the theme. When the paintings are dry, students can connect them in a long line, or make a larger square by taping the nine squares along the back seams.

3 WAYS TO RECYCLE GIFT WRAP

Save pieces of used paper from birthday parties and holiday gifts for art explorations.

PAPER DOLL DRESS-UP Have students cut out clothing (pants, dresses, shoes, hats) for paper dolls from leftover scraps of wrapping paper.

SCRAP WRAP COLLAGE Invite students to create collages out of tiny scraps of gift wrap. Tear or cut scraps into one- and two-inch pieces. Students can draw a simple picture and then cut and glue the scraps to fit. Have students use strips of gift wrap to create a paper frame around their artwork.

GREETING CARDS Have students cut out pictures and patterns from leftover gift wrap to create their own birthday or greeting cards for friends or family.

2 USES FOR BUBBLE WRAP

Pop! Pop! and POP! Everyone loves the sound and feel of bubble wrap. Now you can use it as art.

BUBBLE WRAP COLLAGE Use bubble wrap as a unique base for a translucent collage. To begin, tape a square of bubble wrap to a flat workplace. Tape or glue colorful scraps of paper or art tissue to the bubble wrap. A colorful approach is to use a brush to paint art tissue scraps to the bubble wrap with white glue that has been thinned with water. Display the bubble-wrap collage in a window to see how the light shines through.

BUBBLE PRINTS Wrap bubble wrap around a rolling pin or a paint roller. Use tape to secure. Have students roll the bubble wrap in a tray of tempera paint. When the paint is dry, use the patterned paper to create fish and other paper creatures.



SOCK CREATIONS

Get ready to use stray socks for fun art activities.

ONE-OF-A-KIND SOCK PUPPETS Invite students to create unique sock puppets with old socks and collage materials. Have children bring in single socks—plain or patterned—to create their sock friends. Begin by slipping a piece of cardboard rectangle into the sock to make it easier to work with. Decorate the socks with buttons, yarn, feathers, felt, pompoms and more. Let kids’ imaginations run wild.

SOCK WHAPPER PAINTING Fill an old sock half-full with sand and tie it tightly with a rubber band or yarn to close. Then, pour puddles of tempera paint into trays. Cover a work surface with newspaper. Have students press their socks into the paint and then swing it or whap it on the paper. Some kid artists like to hold their painting socks above the paper and simply drop them (*WHAP!*) onto the paper. (Note: Be prepared for splatters!)

BEAUTIFUL ART WITH BUTTONS

Save all your buttons and ask your friends to save theirs, too. Every single button is an art treasure!

BUTTON CORK PRINTS Have students select buttons with raised patterns and then have an adult use a glue gun to glue each button to the end of a cork. To make prints, have students place their papers atop several layers of newspaper or paper towel. Then let students loose with a variety of button corks and colored stamp pads.

BUTTON BLOSSOMS Invite students to draw flower blossom shapes on scraps of colored or patterned papers. Have students glue a button on the center of each blossom. Students can tape their blossoms to twigs or craft sticks. Some artists like to tape paper leaves on as well. Clean baby food jars or tomato-paste cans make perfect vases for button blossoms!



3 WAYS TO USE YARN

Yarn comes in many interesting colors and textures, from variegated to fuzzy, thin to thick, metallic to glossy.

PAINTY YARN Make painty yarn by soaking 12- to 18-inch yarn strands in a shallow dish of paint. Invite students to drag strands of painty yarn over paper to make designs, allowing different colors to mix on the paper.

YARN PLATE WEAVING Pre-punch holes around the outside of a paper plate. Invite students to sew or weave yarn through the holes, from one hole to another, across the plate, around and around, in and out. The design will grow as students add different colors of yarn.

SPOON PUPPETS With old wooden spoons or small wooden ice-cream spoons, students can create simple puppets with faces and yarn hair. □

MaryAnn F. Kohl is the award-winning author of more than 15 books of art experiences for children of all ages, including *Preschool Art*, *First Art*, *Primary Art*, *Cooking Art*, *Global Art*, *MathArts*, *Making Make-Believe*, and *The Big Messy Art Book*. She lives in Bellingham, Washington.

